



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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Chief Executive Officer

May 2, 2013

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From: William T Fujioka  
Chief Executive Officer

## **PROGRESS REPORT ON IMMIGRATION REFORM (ITEM NO. 34-B, BOARD MEETING OF FEBRUARY 5, 2013)**

This memorandum is to provide a progress report on immigration reform legislation, as instructed by the Board on February 5, 2013.

### **Senate**

On April 16, 2013, S. 744, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013, was introduced. It is the long-awaited comprehensive immigration reform bill, drafted by the bipartisan group of eight Senators, who include: Democratic Senators Schumer (New York), Durbin (Illinois), Menendez (New Jersey), and Bennet (Colorado), and Republican Senators McCain (Arizona), Flake (Arizona), Rubio (Florida), and Graham (South Carolina). The 844-page bill reflects the input of a number of other Senators, including Senator Feinstein who played a major role in negotiating a new agricultural guest worker program, which is included in the bill.

Major elements of S. 744 include:

- **Border Security:** Requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to develop and implement a Comprehensive Border Security Strategy and Southern Border Fencing Strategy, and establishes a trust fund to help implement these strategies;

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- **Interior Enforcement:** Requires all employers to use the automated employment verification system ("E-Verify") within five years. Implements a photo identification component to E-Verify, and also includes immigration court improvements and detention reforms;
- **Path to Citizenship/Legalization:** Provides a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants currently in the United States who meet certain requirements, such as passing criminal background checks, paying back taxes, fines, and application fees, with a simpler and faster path for childhood arrivals ("DREAMers") and undocumented farm workers;
- **Legal Immigration Reforms:** Makes numerous reforms of the current legal immigration system, including changes to the current family-based and economic-based systems, the creation of a new merit-based system and new non-immigrant visa for certain families who are waiting for green cards, and measures aimed at reducing current legal immigration backlogs; and
- **Non-Immigrant (Temporary) Visa Reforms:** Reforms and expands the current H-IB non-immigrant visa program for highly skilled foreign workers, creates a new "W" non-immigrant visa lesser-skilled foreign workers, creates a new agricultural guest worker program, and a new "INVEST" visa for qualifying foreign entrepreneurs.

The Senate Judiciary Committee, which has jurisdiction over immigration, held hearings on comprehensive immigration reform (and S. 744) on April 19, 22, and 23, 2013. Committee mark-up on S. 744 is scheduled to begin on May 9, 2013 with a deadline of 5:00p.m. on May 7, 2013 for Committee members to file amendments to the bill. On May 1, 2013, the Committee already posted a 350-page sponsor's amendment to the bill, which did not significantly change its major elements. Most of the changes were technical corrections, clarifying language, and application fee increases for non-immigrant visas to help finance the cost of implementing the bill. It is widely expected that the Senate Judiciary Committee's mark-up of S. 744 will take up most of the month of May and that Senate floor action will take place in June 2013.

## **House**

Comprehensive immigration reform legislation has not yet been introduced in the House. A bipartisan group of eight members - Democratic Representatives Becerra, Gutierrez (Illinois), Lofgren (California), and Yarmouth (Kentucky) and Republican Representatives Diaz-Balart (Florida), Johnson (Texas), Labrador (Idaho), and Carter (Texas) - have been working on a House immigration reform bill. However, only three

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of them (Lofgren, Gutierrez, and Labrador) serve on the 40-member Judiciary Committee, which has jurisdiction over immigration in the House. Moreover, the Committee's Chairman Goodlatte (R-VA) supports a piece-by-piece approach to enacting immigration legislation rather than through a single immigration reform bill, and his priorities are to begin with bills which would strengthen border security and immigration enforcement and meet economic needs, such as through creating a new agricultural guest worker program and expanding temporary work visas.

It is unclear how the House will address immigration legislation this year though the House leadership previously has indicated that the House will wait for the Senate to pass its immigration reform bill before scheduling legislative action on a House version.

We will continue to keep you advised.

WTF:RA  
MR:MT:ma

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisor  
County Counsel